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Republican Government not everywhere and always the best; and Liberty not
the Birth-right of Mankind.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE ALUMNI SOCIETY

OF

THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON,

ON COMMENCEMENT DAY,

MARCH 30TH, 1852,

BY

PROF. WILLIAM PORCHER MILES,

Anniversary Orator of the Society.

"License they mean when they cry Liberty."—MILTON.

CHARLESTON:

STEAM POWER PRESS OF WALKER & JAMES.

1852.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

CHARLESTON, APRIL 10, 1852.

Prof. W. P. Miles:

DEAR SIR,—At a special meeting of the Society of Alumni of the College of Charleston, held this day, it was unanimously

Resolved, That the thanks of this Society be tendered to Prof. W. P. MILES, for his able, eloquent, and timely Address, delivered before them at the late Commencement of the College, and that a copy of the same be requested for publication.

We take great pleasure in communicating to you the above Resolution, and in urging your compliance with the request of the Society. The sentiments of the Address we could wish to be read and carefully pondered by every American citizen.

Very respectfully yours,

HENRY M. BRUNS,
HENRY D. LESESNE, } *Committee.*
S. P. RAVENEL,

APRIL 13, 1852.

GENTLEMEN,—In consequence of my absence from town, I did not receive your communication of the 10th inst. until to-day.

I thank the Society for their very flattering Resolution with reference to my Address, and herewith transmit a copy of it for publication as they desire. The opinions embodied in it are my deliberate convictions, as I believe they are those of educated men and gentlemen throughout the country, although it has always seemed to me that there has been rather too much hesitancy on their part in the open avowal of them.

I have discharged what I have long considered a duty. I have boldly and unequivocally, but I hope moderately and dispassionately, expressed my sentiments on subjects which I consider of vital importance to our political stability and well-being. I am glad of the opportunity which the Society has afforded me of putting them permanently upon record.

With my best acknowledgments to you, Gentlemen, for the very kind manner in which you have communicated to me the Resolution of the Society,

I remain, with great respect and consideration,

Your obt serv't,

WM. PORCHER MILES.

TO MESSRS. H. M. BRUNS, H. D. LESESNE, S. P. RAVENEL.



ADDRESS.

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Alumni :

It was a very striking saying of a famous man that "in this age *bayonets* think." It is a concise expression of a great truth. The sway of mere brute force is rapidly passing away throughout the Civilized World. The Soldier hitherto a mere machine in the hands of Rulers is beginning to feel that he is a Man and a Citizen, and requires something more to put him in motion than the blood-stirring peals of the trumpet and the simple "Forward !" of his captain. Restless activity of thought is the great characteristic of the age. It pervades all Classes—it permeates the whole mass of Society. Every Order, every Profession, every Occupation, is devoting all its intelligence and energy to its individual elevation, advancement and improvement. "Progress" is the Watchword of the day, and Intellectual Effort is the propelling power. MIND rules. The prestige of old forms and associations is daily becoming weaker. Men are applying themselves with a boldness amounting to audacity to the solution of the most hidden and mysterious Problems of Society, Politics, Science, and Religion. Their daring speculations, from the almost incredible facilities of publication and transmission, are thrown out with a rapidity, and, in consequence, a crudity, which, while it prevents a healthy and proper

digestion, excites a morbid and craving appetite for Novelty. All is excitement and confusion, and there is little time for careful weighing and reflection. Public Opinion, which is but the reflex action of individual thought, partakes of this rapid growth and fluctuating nature. It is, consequently, hasty and violent—"every thing by turns, and nothing long." Yet this same Public Opinion sways the destinies of the Civilized World. It is stronger than Armies or Navies—its voice is louder than the roar of Cannon—it can destroy more surely than the Sword. In the language of Mr. Webster, "there is not a monarch on earth whose Throne is not liable to be shaken to its foundation by the progress of Opinion and the sentiment of the just and intelligent part of the community." To the mere Materialist and Utilitarian this may seem only rhetoric, but the Philosophic Observer has only to cast his eyes over the world to behold its fullest confirmation. What has shorn the Land-holders of England—the haughtiest and most powerful Aristocracy in the world,—of many of their dearest and most jealously guarded privileges? What means this modern "Pressure from without"—a thing undreamed of under the Plantagenets and the Tudors—which can bend and awe a British Senate? What has levelled with the dust the pomp, and power, and pride of the Pontiff who sits enthroned upon the Seven-hilled City, and shaken almost to its fall the Triple Tiara which once so firmly encircled the imperious brows of Hildebrande? What has in little more than half a century made France successively a Monarchy, a Republic, an Empire, again a Monarchy, again a Republic, and finally a Military Despotism? PUBLIC OPINION—however created or moulded—whether right or wrong

—still Public Opinion—the Moral Will and Sentiment, or, if you choose, the want of moral will and sentiment in the People ; in any event a Moral and Intellectual in contradistinction to a Material and Physical cause.

Such, then, being the overwhelming force of this subtle and almost intangible Moral Agent, created or directed for the most part—as in the instances to which I have briefly alluded—by a few master minds, how great is the responsibility resting upon those who, by their position, have the greatest share in its creation and direction. I mean the EDUCATED CLASSES. How grievous an account will Posterity exact of their memories for evils which may have arisen, whether through their mistakes or their supineness, and on the other hand, how glorious will be their reward who have manfully discharged their duty as thinking Men and as Citizens—stemming the tide of false Political Doctrines and disorganizing Social Theories which, in these latter days, are sweeping like a torrent over the face of the earth. Verily they shall have their reward even in this world ; in the future approval of the Wise and the Good ; in the hearty “ WELL DONE ! ” of the Coming Time !

It has seemed to me, therefore, Gentlemen, singularly appropriate in addressing you, who as the Alumni of a School of Learning may be considered in some measure the Representatives of these Classes, to direct your attention to two of the chief of those Political and Social Errors which seem to be gaining ground in the World, and whose progress the Wise and Good in all countries are watching with painful apprehension. And such an examination is more particularly necessary in this country, where Freedom of Thought, Freedom of Action,

and Freedom of the Press run riot, until they often degenerate into the grossest License, and where, in consequence, the widest field lies open for sowing the seed of every hurtful weed of Doctrine. And while the Harvest promises truly to be great, the Labourers are *not* few. This "Asylum for the Oppressed of every Clime," in the cant phraseology of the day, is in some danger of becoming a sort of Lazar-House for all the Social and Political Diseases of Europe—crowded in which, as in a Hospital, they may in time taint and infect the Moral Atmosphere. What is to be the fate of a Nation whose nationality is daily diluted by such copious Foreign Streams, many of them but the drains and sewers of the Old World, it is difficult to say. Whether there is Good enough to leaven the mass and keep it sound and wholesome—or whether the Bad will gradually vitiate and corrupt the whole—time only can show. Meanwhile it is clearly the duty of every true lover of his country to direct his earnest attention to what is admitted on all hands to be a serious and increasing evil. And here I desire to be distinctly understood. I wish not to repel the honest, industrious, and order-loving Emigrant who seeks on our shores a refuge from misery and suffering in his own land, and a new field for the earnest development of his energies; who, grateful for the blessings we freely extend him, works quietly and heartily with us in elevating and improving the condition of what is thenceforth for us and for him, a Common Country. Such a one I would cordially welcome. A country new, and but partially reclaimed from the wilderness, needs him. But I do *not* welcome him who thanklessly grasps, without any feeling of gratitude, the boon of

Civil Liberty as if it were merely his due; who, uninformed and without preparation, at once thrusts himself with clamorous bullyism into every contest; and who, while casting back a revengeful scowl across the waters at the Rulers who he thinks have so long tyrannically kept him out of his natural inheritance, chafes at the restraints of Law and Society in his new home as partaking in some sort of the same tyranny. Such a one we do not desire. Yet such, I fear, constitute no small portion of those who flock to "the Asylum." It is not for me to presume to suggest a remedy in a matter involving so many nice considerations, and, confessedly, of so much difficulty and delicacy. It is an evil, perhaps, which cannot be reached by Legislative enactments. But the truckling in so many of our larger cities to what is openly and unblushingly called "*The Foreign Influence*," and the attendant Bribery and Corruption which mark their municipal elections, are tending not only to denationalize us as a Nation, but to degrade us as a People, and it behoves the Educated and Intelligent Classes at once to interpose their influence, and say authoritatively that *these things shall no longer be*.

But I have merely glanced at this matter in passing, because it lay immediately in my path to the consideration of one of those prevalent Political Errors which I stated it was my object to bring before your notice. I refer to the almost universal belief in this country, and that not a passive but an active belief, that a *Republican form of Government is not only the best form of Government, abstractly—but that it is necessarily, everywhere and always the only good, and tolerable, and true form of Government*. And this is a notion so

widely spread among us, that I fear that in stating it as an Error—even before this intelligent and educated audience—I will excite at first some little surprise. But I do not fear that you will misunderstand me. As an American addressing Americans, it is hardly necessary for me to say that I believe our Form of Government to be not only the best possible Form *for us*, but really the only one that could even measurably secure to us those blessings whose security must be the prime object of all Government. No thinking man, whatever Abstract Theory he may hold—whatever may be his predilections and prejudices—can seriously doubt this. In fact, there is little room for choice. For ruling the Anglo-Saxon race, no National Constitution which does not recognize the great principles of the Responsibility of the Rulers to the Ruled, and the right of the Citizen to assist in framing the Laws and to tax himself, can be available. The English Constitution and our own—parent and child historically—are really the only two which practically do this, and are consequently the only two between which even the Speculative Theorist would have to decide. But a Government similar to that of England cannot be formed by Legislative Enactments and a Paper Constitution. We cannot *create* a ruling Dynasty, nor, its necessary support, an Hereditary Nobility. They are not matters of a few Generations, nor of a few Centuries. A Thousand Years would scarcely be sufficient to give them that hold upon National Sentiment which would ensure stability. No one, therefore, whatever may be his theoretic views, can believe a Monarchical Form of Government practicable or possible in Our Country. It remains, then, that our Republican Form is, as I said before, not only for us the best, but the only practicable one.

But while sincerely and firmly believing this, I am by no means prepared to allow that what is best for us is always and everywhere the best possible. A Republican Form of Government is morally and intellectually the highest Form, inasmuch as it presupposes the highest Moral and Intellectual Development of the People. Where, therefore, such development exists, or rather such an approximation to it as human frailty admits—there the people are capable of Self-control and Self-government. But even there, from its very fundamental assumption, it lacks some of those counterbalances and checks which exist in Governments founded upon a lower theory of the Perfectibility of Human Nature. It is more liable to sudden changes. Its moral tone is more directly influenced by the prevailing modes of thought and manners of the people. It wants more of that innate, Recuperative Force, which after every departure can bring it back to, and make it conform with, the Original Type. So that waiving the discussion of the general question, as to which is upon the whole the *best Theory* upon which to construct the Constitution of a Government—we are at least safe in assuming that *it is not every condition of a People—nor even every People in their best condition—which admits of or can support Republican or Self-government.*

Our own great experiment in America had everything in its favour, whether we look to the Character of the People, the Geographical Position of the Country, or the adventitious circumstances of the case. The Anglo-Saxon race seem to possess in an eminent degree those qualities requisite for National Self-government; an inflexible love of justice; great tenacity of purpose; a certain instinctive reverence for existing institutions

which makes them averse from fickle changes ; a constitutional equanimity and moderation ; in a word, a steady equilibrium resulting from the due mixture of attributes peculiarly their own, sound Judgment and practical Common Sense. Three thousand miles of ocean—equivalent to almost thrice that distance in these days of rapid steam navigation—separated us from the intriguing influences of jealous and powerful Governments. The nice and perplexing questions involved in the adjustment of the claims of antagonistic Orders and Classes—of immense and conflicting Social Interests—of the insolent, apathetic Rich on the one hand, and the hungry-eyed, desperate-minded Poor on the other—all those momentous and terrible Problems which impede Reform and fetter Progress in the old and densely crowded Communities of Europe, were with us happily and entirely wanting. They lay so far in the future as not even to “cast their shadows before” to appal and daunt us. Never perhaps before in the history of the World had such an opportunity been afforded—never perhaps in its history will such an opportunity again offer—of trying fairly and thoroughly on a noble and majestic scale, the Theory which throughout all ages—from Plato to Sydney—had been the cherished dream of Philosophers and Statesmen. We have tried it. And yet even among us there are not wanting wise and good men who look upon our experiment as still but an experiment. Our existence as a Nation has been but for little more than three quarters of a century—(a very small fraction in the life of a people)—and already there are distracting forces at work which not only threaten to break up what the founders of it regarded as the essential frame-work of

our Government, but to convert it into an absolute Democratic Despotism in the hands of a Numerical Majority !

France stands out as a beacon to warn those who too rashly and enthusiastically assume that the Republican form is always either the truest or the simplest. Look at the revolution of '92, which boasted itself the assertor of the Rights of Man—which arrogantly claimed as its mission the Social and Political Regeneration of the World ! What tyrannies were committed—what horrors were perpetrated in the sacred name of Liberty ! In a state of moral intoxication, the French murdered the descendant of ST. LOUIS and HENRY IV.—and then crouched beneath the iron rod of a Demagogue Emperor ! Worn out and exhausted by the exactions of his ambition, they were forced to see their Idol and Sovereign an exile, and to receive a hated and exiled race once more as Sovereigns. Again they deposed them, and placed upon the tottering throne what they were pleased to call a "Citizen King." Him they drive in turn with ignominy from the country, and once more under the smirched banner of Liberty and Equality, proclaim themselves "free, regenerate, and disenthralled !" But scarcely have they done so, when they quietly submit to an absolute Military Usurpation, and sanction it by the suffrages of over seven millions of—*Freemen !* What will be the next act in the drama or the farce, no one can with any confidence predict. The next mail may bring us information of some new *emeute* which has entirely overthrown the existing order of things ; nor would it excite the least astonishment or surprise. So much for French attempts at Republican Government. And yet what Nation stands

higher than France in civilization, intelligence, and refinement? What people have contributed more to the advancement of Science, Philosophy, and all the Social Arts? Into every department of human knowledge—into every region of thought and speculation, they have pressed forward among the foremost. But they have yet to learn the art of Self-government.

To what conclusion, then, in view of all this, ought we to come? Why, that there *is not any One specific form of Government into which, as into the bed of Procrustes, you can force the Body Politic*. The Form of Government is but the Outward Development of the Inner Life of a People. It not only may differ—but must differ—with different People and different Social Organizations. Nations have grown great and powerful, and fulfilled their missions in furthering Civilization and the elevation of man's nature under various and opposite forms of Government. The Social and Political requirements of one people are not less distinct from those of another than their Physical requirements. The Italian or the Spaniard does not need, nor would he be nourished by, the beef and beer of the Englishman, nor would the latter thrive on the train oil of the Laplander; so, too, the clothing requisite in the one case would be insufficient or an encumbrance in the others. How irrational and Quixotic, then, must be the attempt to go about the world in a spirit of Political Propagandism, making proselytes to Republicanism among the Nations.

I have been led into the foregoing train of thought, as you will perhaps before this have imagined, by recent occurrences at the North and West, and the prominent part which they have filled in the public eye

will be, I trust, my excuse for a digression, which will serve at the same time as an illustration of my subject. We have seen an Exile and a Fugitive welcomed to our shores with a sort of furor of enthusiasm. Processions, Feastings, and—the essential American accompaniment—Speech-making, have marked his triumphal progress through the land. Congress in solemn conclave have received him with the same forms—studiously copied—with which they received Lafayette—the friend and fellow-soldier of Washington—a coadjutor with us in our struggle for independence—a man to whom the Nation owed a debt of gratitude. Our National Representatives have made him a feast, and there some of the most distinguished men in the country, including high dignitaries of Government, have made discourses laudatory of him, and expressive of sympathy with his cause. Members of the Senate from their seats have made elaborate speeches to the same purport. The daily papers are filled with the sayings, the doings, and the movements of this Stranger. It is true that in this country where the Mercurial spirit of the people, like that of the ancient Athenians, is always restlessly seeking for “something new,” we have seen at sundry times Fiddlers and Dancers—fashionable Novelists and Actors—vagrant Lords and acreless Barons—vulgar *Roues* and vagabond scions of noble houses, of no repute, or of ill repute at home—call forth somewhat similar demonstrations; and we have also seen that not all the ridicule, contempt, and ingratitude, which they have so often reaped in return, has been able entirely to cure our people of their mania for “Lion-hunting.” Such considerations may season our admiration for awhile; but there are peculiar circum-

stances in the present case which may well elicit the gravest thought and reflection. Who then is this Stranger, and what is his Cause? But a very short time ago few, or none of us, could have given any answer to these questions, and even now in the height of the enthusiasm for both, it is difficult in any quarter to obtain satisfactory replies. Of Kossuth we know that he is a man of fluent eloquence, of fascinating address, of patient fortitude, possessed in a remarkable degree of what is certainly a main element in all true greatness, faith in himself, and in what he believes to be his mission. But to what extent is he a true Representative of Hungary—a true exponent of her National Sentiment? We have all read Count Bathyani's letter to the Editor of *The Times*, and it is very obvious that *he* does not regard him as such a representative or such an exponent. Yet the family of Bathyani is one of the most powerful, influential, and patriotic in Hungary, and its patriotic devotion has been tried and proved by adversities, losses, and unselfish sacrifices. All this applies equally to the Esterhazy family. They have always been prominent for their earnest and disinterested love of their country—for their zealous advocacy liberal and enlightened measures likely to elevate and improve her condition. But, it may be said, these are the representatives of a proud Aristocracy—of the privileged classes—Kossuth is a man of the people, and therefore naturally obnoxious to the mistrust and jealousy of the Gentry. This may be so. But what means have we—still more—what right have we of deciding between them? Hungary has for centuries been practically an Oligarchy—ruled by her Ecclesiastical Dignitaries and her Nobles, who together constituted the

Upper Estate—or, as it was called, “the Upper Table” in her Diet. It is true she has been a component part of the Austrian Empire since 1438—long before the discovery of this country by Columbus—when her crown was united to that of Austria, not by forcible subjugation, but by a marriage with the heiress of the last Hungarian monarch. But though nominally under the Austrian sceptre, she has for the greater part of the time virtually governed herself. Without the sanction of the Diet, the King could not make or change the laws, impose taxes, or even levy troops, and before his coronation was required to take an oath to maintain the Constitution of Hungary. She has quarrelled with the Emperor of Austria—her legitimate and rightful sovereign—on a question of privileges. She thought him oppressive and exacting—he thought her unruly and unreasonable. It has been submitted to the arbitrament of the sword, and in the struggle the Emperor so far has had the advantage. Is it not downright impertinence in us—ignorant of the political relations of the two countries—of their mutual obligations—of the very gist of the dispute—to thrust ourselves forward as Umpires in their quarrel?

But what is Kossuth’s MISSION—the great Cause about which some of our Northern and Western brethren appear to be so enthusiastic? If Kossuth merely aims at detaching Hungary from the Austrian Empire, it is, in the first place, a matter of whose justice, sound policy and expediency, we are not, and cannot be, in the very nature of things, sufficiently well informed to judge; nor does it become us to meddle in the matter, any more than it would become us to meddle with the question of the repeal of the Union of England and

Scotland, or of England and Ireland? All such questions are questions of National Policy which can be, and ought to be, determined solely by those immediately interested. But if Kossuth's aim be merely the establishment of the Separate Nationality of Hungary, without any definite views with reference to ulterior changes in her Interior Organization, Political or Social—what sympathy have Red Republicans, Socialists, and Communists—Abolitionists, Free-Soilers and Barn-burners, with his cause? The mere severance of the political ties between Hungary and Austria would be nothing gained for *their* cause. The internal Government of Hungary, as I have already stated, has always been an Aristocracy of the most absolute form. The mass of the people are still in a state of almost predial bondage—are of a different race from their rulers, and looked down upon by them as absolute inferiors, politically and socially. We do not see, therefore, how the mere independence of Hungary of the Austrian crown is necessarily to better the condition of the Lower Classes—who, by the way, to the disciples of a morbid philanthropy, seem to be the only portion of humanity endowed with any rights, feelings, or finer sensibilities, or entitled to genuine countenance and sympathy. But if Kossuth's mission—as would seem to be indicated by his speech at Marseilles—but above all by the character of his admirers (for it is a true adage that *a man is known by the company he keeps*)—be to revolutionize and *democratize* Hungary—to further the spread of Red Republicanism and Socialism—then is every true lover of order not only bound to stand aloof—but to discourage such a design and denounce such principles. But, as I have already said, we are not sufficiently in-

formed in the matter to decide dogmatically. It is a sound and sensible proverb, "*When you are in doubt do nothing.*" But I will reiterate the substance of my opening remarks, that the Form of Government of a people ought not to be determined by foreign and extrinsic influences. I do not mean to lay down the broad principle that the intervention of one nation in the affairs of others is never justifiable or even necessary. But Political Crusades are impolitic and dangerous, and are apt to be productive of as small permanent results as the Religious Crusades of the Middle Ages. The true policy of a nation is to a great degree selfish. Let her chief aim be to conserve or to perfect her own Constitution; to elevate and improve the condition of her own people. The finite intellect of man is incapable of marking out for them the destinies of all Races and Peoples. The Supreme Ruler of the universe "shapes the ends" of nations as of individuals. In his good time he will enable the earnest and struggling spirit to reach the light. Let us then, while thankfully enjoying a form of Popular Government, which seems most advisable for us, leave other nations to work out for themselves, as we have done, the problem as to what Political Form is best adapted to their peculiar growth and development.

But forms of Government after all, Gentlemen, it will perhaps be generally admitted, are of less consequence than that which is ostensibly the end of all Government—the true interests and well-being of the Governed. And this leads me to the consideration of the other prevalent Political and Social Error of the times, which I stated it was my object to lay before you, and which in fact is intimately involved in that

which we have just been considering. I refer to the common notion that *Liberty is the Birth-right of Mankind*. Nothing can be more fallacious or wider of the truth. There is, it is true, a certain degree of Liberty to which all men are naturally entitled, and of which Tyrants cannot deprive them without deadly sin. I mean the Liberty to obey the Moral Law of Conscience—the Liberty of Will requisite to Individuality—that which makes man a creature accountable to God. This liberty our Saviour and his Apostles preached. This liberty Christianity proclaims to all men. But this is a widely different thing from Civil or Political Liberty. And to show how widely different the Founders of our Religion considered it, they everywhere in the most explicit manner enforced the duty of indiscriminating obedience to the powers that be. “Servants be obedient to your Masters.” “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s.” “Honor the King.” And yet in the face of such positive instructions there are not wanting those who contend that Christianity teaches the entire Equality of all men—and who claim Christ himself as the Divine Founder of Democracy!

By LIBERTY these modern speculators mean, *A Naked and Absolute Freedom from all but self-imposed control, and entire and Unlimited Equality in Social Privileges and Political Power*. It is this levelling and disorganizing doctrine which is now sweeping with fearful power over the world, and which, if unchecked, will uproot and destroy all that is venerable and time-honored in Politics—all that is conservative in Society—all that is pure in Morals—nay, even the very bulwarks of Religious Faith. And this it will do, because its very essence is a mixture of SELFISHNESS

and VANITY—the one tending to overthrow every barrier to personal indulgence—the other begetting a self-complacency that makes each one's Individual Opinion the sole and infallible test of Truth and Right. Carried out to its legitimate results, this doctrine must disintegrate and dissolve Society. The mutual concessions and sacrifices upon which its healthy organization depends would be swept away and replaced by separate, discordant and conflicting interests. Of each individual it might then be said, that "His hand was against every man's and every man's hand against his"—and the poet's description would be a picture of human life—

"Those who be up themselves keep others low;
Those who be down themselves hold others hard;
Ne suffer them to rise, ne greater grow,
But every one doth strive his neighbor down to throw."

All cannot have every thing. This would seem self-evident. Yet it is the very contrary of this which Red-Republicanism, Socialism, or whatever other form the Hydra-headed Monster may assume, practically asserts.*

POLITICAL LIBERTY, Gentlemen, I say it boldly, is *not an Inalienable Right, but an Acquired Privilege.*

* "This, although not the same, has some resemblance to the modern doctrine of eternal progress; which, of course, is eternal imperfection, and which allows of nothing fixed or established, any more than the ancient tenet that *all things flowed and that nothing stood.* This philosophy, too, like some of the sophisms of our own day, had 'a wonderful alacrity at sinking' down into the vulgar mind, and of inspiring *the masses* with the most exalted opinion of the doctrine and its teachers; 'so that the very cobblers, (*οἱ σκυροτόμοι*), when they had *inbibed* or become *inspired* with this profound system of fluxions, abandoned at once that foolish old notion, that some things stand, (*ἐπαύσαντο ἡλιθίως οἰόμενοι τὰ μὲν ἰστάναι τὰ δὲ κινεῖσθαι τῶν ὄντων*), and when they were told that *all things were moving*, they greatly honored those who taught them this,' as being a most comforting and democratic doctrine. See Theætetetus, 180, A. B., &c." (Tayler Lewis's Edition of Plato contra Atheos. New-York, 1845, page 160.)

To regard it in any other light, is to lower its value and debase its nature. The monstrous and dangerous fallacy of THOMAS JEFFERSON, with which our Declaration of Independence begins, (but peace to the ashes of one who, with all his errors, still, in his day and generation, "did the State some service,") has, even among us, by thinking men been long detected and abandoned. And yet this very fallacy, which melts away at the first breath of logic—which vanishes at the first glance of reason and good sense—has been made the foundation, the corner-stone of almost all the Political fabrics which the restless imaginations of men, in so many countries, are striving to erect. But they will find their labor in vain, and that they are building upon sand. *Men are neither born Free nor Equal.* They may, and ought to, aspire to be Free—they cannot, nor is it desirable that they should, all become Equal. Perfect Equality is contrary to all the Analogies of Nature. "One star differeth from another star in glory." Animals of the same species vary in size and strength. No two trees or plants enjoy the same advantages of sun and soil, and they have not, in consequence, the same growth and luxuriance. Rivers differ in size and depth, and are tributary one to another. Throughout the entire cycle of the Material Creation we see contrast, difference, inequality. It is the connection of all the parts—the inter-dependence between the great and the small—the strong and the weak—that brings about the beautiful Harmony of Nature. And so it must be in the Moral and Intellectual World. We see among men the most various and opposite mental and moral constitutions—all degrees of difference in ability and

power—all shades of contrast in natural or acquired advantages. But, if we could suppose men to commence life with the same ability, the same advantages, and under precisely the same circumstances, how long would their relative positions remain unchanged? One grows rich, while the other grows poor. One conquers the highest approbation and esteem of his fellows, the other brings down upon himself their scorn and contempt. Each one develops his nature, and you cannot transform the one into the other. *Non fit Mercurius e quovis ligno.* You cannot, by the magic of any Political legerdemain, make a Statesman of him who God intended should be a Ploughman; nor, on the other hand, can any political power, without a violation of the true idea of Freedom, bind down forever to the plough him to whom God has given a mind capable of shaping the destinies of a People. *FREEDOM, therefore, of Development, each in his legitimate sphere, and EQUALITY, as far as may be, in the conditions under which it is to be put forth, are Political and Social Rights to which all Men are entitled.*

But to such Rational Freedom—Freedom within the bounds of Law—Freedom, in the language of a great living Poet of England,

“ To live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear,”

Men, I again repeat, are not born, but must aspire. It is a high Political Boon, of which they must make and prove themselves worthy, before they can claim it as a Right. It is a goal only to be reached by an arduous and self-denying course of Intelligence, Virtue and Patriotism. It is a treasure only to be preserved by Moderation, Justice, and assiduous Self-culture.

True Liberty, Gentlemen, is no exotic, no hot-house plant. It must be indigenous and spring from the soil. It must be rooted in the nature, manners and habits, no less than the thoughts and affections, of a People. You cannot force or rear it under the bell-glass of a mere Written Constitution. It must inspire the free air of its native plains. It must expand under the genial warmth of its native sun. It must be fanned by the sighs of Patriots, and watered with their tears and blood. It is a tree which

“Sucks kindlier nurture from the soil enriched
By its own fallen leaves.”

You cannot transplant it to an ungenial clime, without its drooping and dying, or becoming dwarfed and insignificant. But, in congenial ground, though of slow growth, it is a hardy plant. It may be scarred by Despotism and Violence. Its tender shoots may be nipped by the frosts of Faint-heartedness or Treason. It may be almost prostrated by the rude blasts of Popular Fury and Passion. But if its Germ was in the soil—if it is no “chance-sown sapling,” but a Native of the Land—IT WILL GROW. It will expand and put forth branches. It will rear its tall crest to heaven. Its rooted trunk will defy the winter torrent and the summer storm. Its summit will be clothed with undying verdure, and beneath its shade the children’s children of those who tended it will securely rest!